

# OUTPATIENT CIVIL COMMITMENT PILOT

*Commission to Study Mental and Behavioral Health  
Public Safety & Judicial System Subcommittee  
October 20, 2020*



**Behavioral Health System**  
Baltimore

# OVERVIEW

- Role of BHSB
- Outpatient Civil Commitment (OCC) Philosophy and History in Maryland
- OCC Pilot Program



# CORE FUNCTIONS



# IN A NUTSHELL...

**Outpatient Civil Commitment (OCC)** is a service delivery model that requires an individual who meets certain criteria to adhere to a mental health treatment regimen in the community for a defined period of time in lieu of inpatient hospitalization

# OCC PROJECT PARTNERS

- Maryland Behavioral Health Administration
- Behavioral Health System Baltimore
- Office of Administrative Hearings
- Grace Medical Center (LifeBridge Health)
- Disability Rights Maryland
- NAMI Maryland
- Mental Health Association of Maryland
- Maryland Hospital Association
- On Our Own of Maryland

# HISTORY

## 2016

- OCC proposal approved by SAMHSA

## 2017

- HB 1383 Behavioral Health Administration –Outpatient Civil Commitment Pilot Program
- Promulgation of regulations and two public comment periods
- Program Start in October

## 2018

- Returned funding to SAMHSA, which paused program
- Program restarted in October

## 2019

- HB427 Behavioral Health Administration –Outpatient Civil Commitment Pilot Program—Revisions
- Regulation change in September to expand program eligibility and allow family members to request referral

# GOALS OF OCC

- Reduce inpatient hospitalizations
- Increase connection to outpatient behavioral health services
- Realize cost savings to the public behavioral health system
- Improve program participants' health outcomes and quality of life

# MARYLAND OCC PILOT PROGRAM

## OVERVIEW

- Individuals can voluntarily participate or be ordered into the program through OCC hearing
- Program participation is 6 months
- Program provides intensive peer support and outreach to assist individuals to connect with care in the community
- BHSB provides system accountability by having an OCC Monitor oversee individuals' engagement in services
- Pilot program operates in Baltimore City



# OCC in MARYLAND

## How are we similar?

- All OCC programs have similar goals
- “Commitment”—  
Involvement of civil legal system
- Individual cannot disenroll until commitment period ends

## How are we different?

- Offer voluntary and involuntary enrollment
- Peer support specialists are primary intervention method
- Individual can have inconsistent or poor engagement/adherence to outpatient treatment and remain in outpatient setting.

# ELIGIBILITY

- ☐ Are an adult diagnosed with a mental health disorder
- ☐ Live in Baltimore City or are homeless and looking for housing in the City
- ☐ Have a history of refusing, not following through with, or not fully engaging with community mental health services

## For Voluntary Referral:

## For Involuntary Referral:

- ☐ Agree to be referred to OCC
- ☐ \*Are currently hospitalized in an inpatient psychiatric hospital and
- ☐ \*Have been hospitalized in an inpatient psychiatric hospital at least one other time within the past 12 months (\*New)

- ☐ Do not agree to be referred to OCC
- ☐ Are currently retained in an inpatient psychiatric hospital and
- ☐ Have been retained in an inpatient psychiatric hospital at least one other time within the past 12 months

# REFERRAL PROCESS

- Inpatient psychiatric facility makes referral (for voluntary and involuntary) to BHSB
  - Submit completed referral forms to Fax: (443) 320 4568 or Encrypted Email: [ClinicalServices2@BHSBaltimore.org](mailto:ClinicalServices2@BHSBaltimore.org)
- Within 3 business days, BHSB confirms eligibility and sends approved referral to Grace Medical
- Grace Medical peer recovery specialist begins engagement and treatment planning
- Hearing/settlement agreement conf scheduled with OAH

# THE ROLE OF HOSPITALS IN OCC

- Identify eligible individuals
- Referral to BHSB
- OCC and discharge planning
  - OCC augments discharge plan—does not replace it
- Involuntary commitments
  - Process for involuntary commitment
  - Required to notify the patient and legal service provider of the date and time of the hearing
  - Hospital staff are part of settlement agreement
- Collaboration with Peer Support Specialists

# ROLE OF PEER SUPPORT

- Peers are individuals with lived experience
- Role is to connect patients to the existing system of care
- Peer support services make Maryland's program distinct from other states

# SUCCESS IS IN THE STORIES

**"I didn't know there were so many resources out there. They took me to the food-coop and gave me free sheets. I got a fan. They didn't waste time getting me that. It helped a lot with the heat. They get me to appointments. They helped so much."**

**"The program is going okay for me. I was in the hospital. They came in and the judge recommended the program. There was a female judge who talked to me. She recommended it and I accepted."**



**Behavioral Health System**  
Baltimore

*Envisioning a city where people  
live and thrive in communities  
that promote and support  
behavioral health.*

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